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THE ATELIER

PRACTICAL WOOD-CARVING AND DESIGNING.

IV.—ELEMENTARY CARVING.



SURFACE CARVING.—There is nothing to prevent a person of average ability from doing artistic carving, if he will take such progressive steps as are found to lead to success in other technical arts. The simplest kind of carving is surface work. A casket, book-rack, picture-frame, book-covers, or the top and edges of a small parlor-stand, can all be made attractive and beautiful if decorated with appropriate designs in surface work. The best results are obtained when surface work is done on wood that is properly "finished." Black walnut and cherry, the woods recommended for the work spoken of, are said to be finished when the grain is perfectly filled with three or four coats of shellac, with a final rubbing down with pumice-stone and oil, giving a smooth face, with little or no varnish on the surface. Ordinary varnish, the basis of which is resin, will not give a surface that can be carved; it "brackles" and flies into little dusty flakes as the tool touches it, and a clean cut cannot be made unless the surface is prepared as recommended.

The design to be carved must first be drawn on paper. It may be an original study, or a design selected from *The Art Amateur*. It is transferred to the wood in the following way: Place the drawing on the wood which is to be carved, in the exact position the design is required to be; slip a sheet of carbon paper underneath the drawing, taking care that it comes to the full limit of the design; then go over the entire drawing, either with a sharp pencil or, better, with an ivory or agate tracer, which will transfer the design to the wood. Black, red and white carbon paper can be bought of any dealer in art materials. Black is best for unpolished; red or white shows most distinctly on polished wood. As a substitute for carbon paper you can scrape red chalk over the back of the drawing, rubbing it evenly over the surface. White chalk may be used when nothing else can be obtained, but it is not desirable, as it fails to yield a sharp outline from the tracer.

When the outline is transferred, it is advisable, before beginning to carve it, to go over the design with an etching or scratching point, at the same time correcting any errors that may have been made in transferring. This is necessary to prevent the design from being rubbed

out while carving. The design being thus outlined, it is ready to be cut with a parting tool; a short or engraver's tool will be found more convenient than a long tool. A surface design—for the sides or top of a casket, for instance—needs a border. Mark off with a gauge three eighths or half an inch in width. After the design is outlined with the parting tool, the background—that is, every portion within the border not covered with the design—should be stamped. It is a matter of taste whether the stamping be done on the polished surface or whether the surface be first removed, which is best done with

is usually left unoled. If oil is desired, use raw linseed.

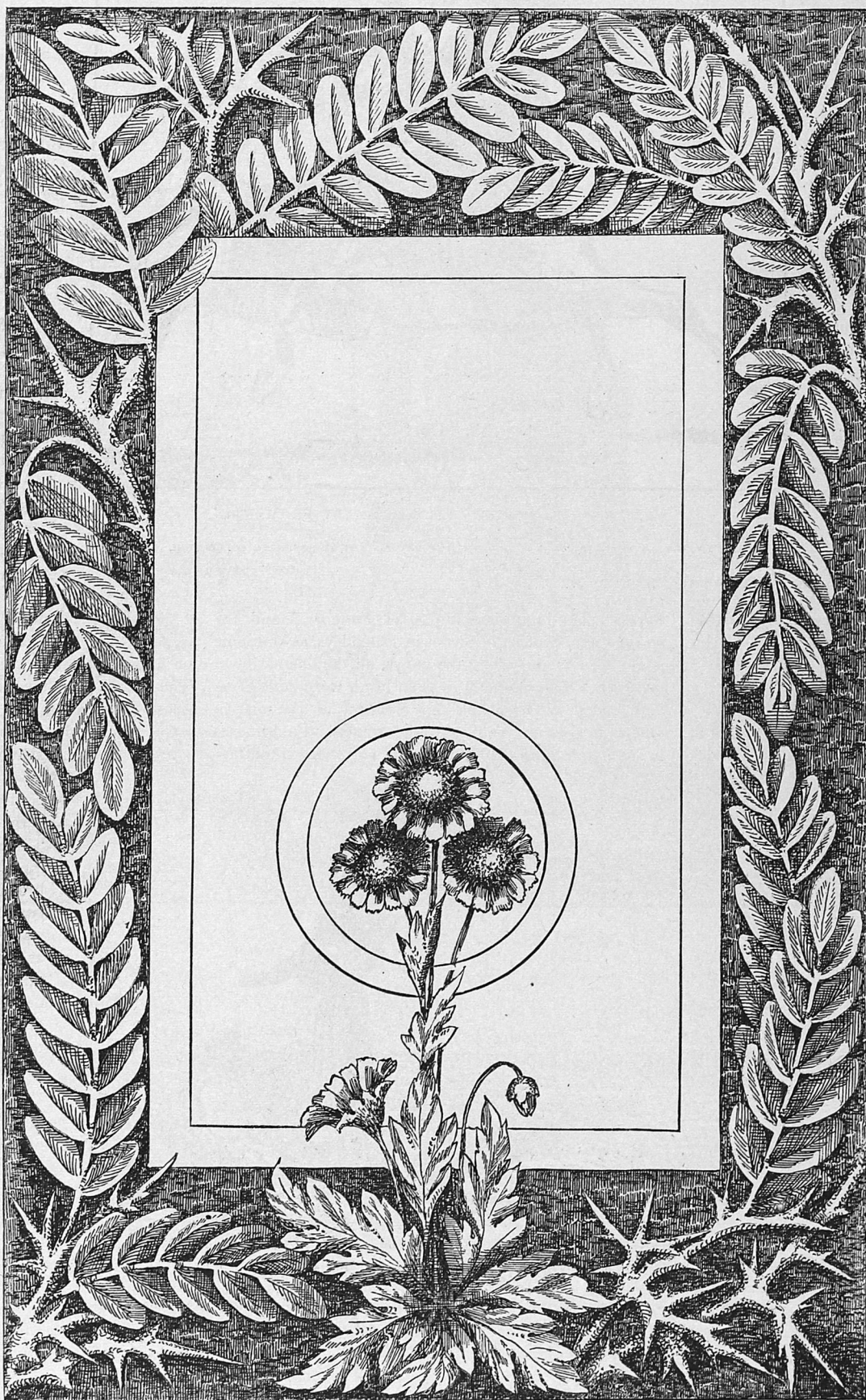
A very beautiful effect is produced in surface carving when such leaves or petals as overlap others are slightly scraped with a knife, removing some of the polish and revealing the lighter wood. The hardest scraping should be toward the edge, and should not, as a rule, exceed one fourth or three eighths of an inch in width.

INCISED CARVING produces the most striking effect when done on a polished surface. Surface carving may be combined with incised work. If the design, for ex-

ample, is the wild rose, the leaves may be in surface work and the flowers incised. Incised carving must first be outlined with a parting tool; then the surface of the wood is removed with a flat gouge, generally to the depth of not much more than one sixteenth of an inch. When leaves or petals overlap each other, the overlapping leaf is left as high as possible, showing a vertical cut at the edge, the underlying leaf being modelled one sixteenth of an inch lower. The modelling of serrated leaves—as, for example, the wild rose or Virginia creeper—is most effective when a parting tool cut indicates the central vein, and a gouge cut runs from the edge of the leaf slanting toward the centre, and, of course, in the direction of the stem or petiole of the leaf. In modelling grasses or narrow leaves, cut the central vein or mid-rib with a parting tool, then run a flat gouge on either side of the central cut, leaving the edge of both sides as high as possible, but somewhat lower on the side toward the centre than at the outer edge of the leaf.

RELIEF CARVING.—When a design is to be lowered, the carving is done on the wood in the condition it leaves the cabinet-maker's bench. The cabinet-maker should be reminded not to use sand-paper, but the scraper, to make his work smooth. Sand-paper used on wood dulls and spoils the edge of the carver's tools. When the design is transferred to the wood, lower with a narrow chisel or flat gouge, according to the outline of the design. The learner should be cautioned against driving his chisel too deeply into the wood in outlining, especially when thin stems are being cut. Handle the chisel vertically and give a light tap or two; then, slanting

the tool, cut out an angular chip. This is called a relieving cut, as it enables a tool to cut still deeper without wedging and pressing too hard against the leaf or stem, and perhaps breaking it off.



a flat gouge. The latter method makes the greater contrast by throwing the design into brighter relief, but has not, perhaps, quite so satisfactory and artistic a look as when the polished surface is stamped over. Such work

The learner is advised at first to lower not more than three sixteenths of an inch. This will give sufficient depth for good relief effect. The cleaning out is best done with a bent chisel of one eighth and another one fourth inch in width, the ground being cleaned and smoothed with a very flat gouge, which will be found more effective than a chisel, and leave the background sufficiently smooth for stamping. When the design is outlined and the background lowered, begin modelling by first lowering the stems and underlying leaves. When these portions are cut away, the student will more readily see what modelling is necessary to make his leaves and blossoms look natural. They must be varied, but in every case the leaves will be lowest at their tips.

BENN PITMAN.

PAINTING IN WATER-COLORS.

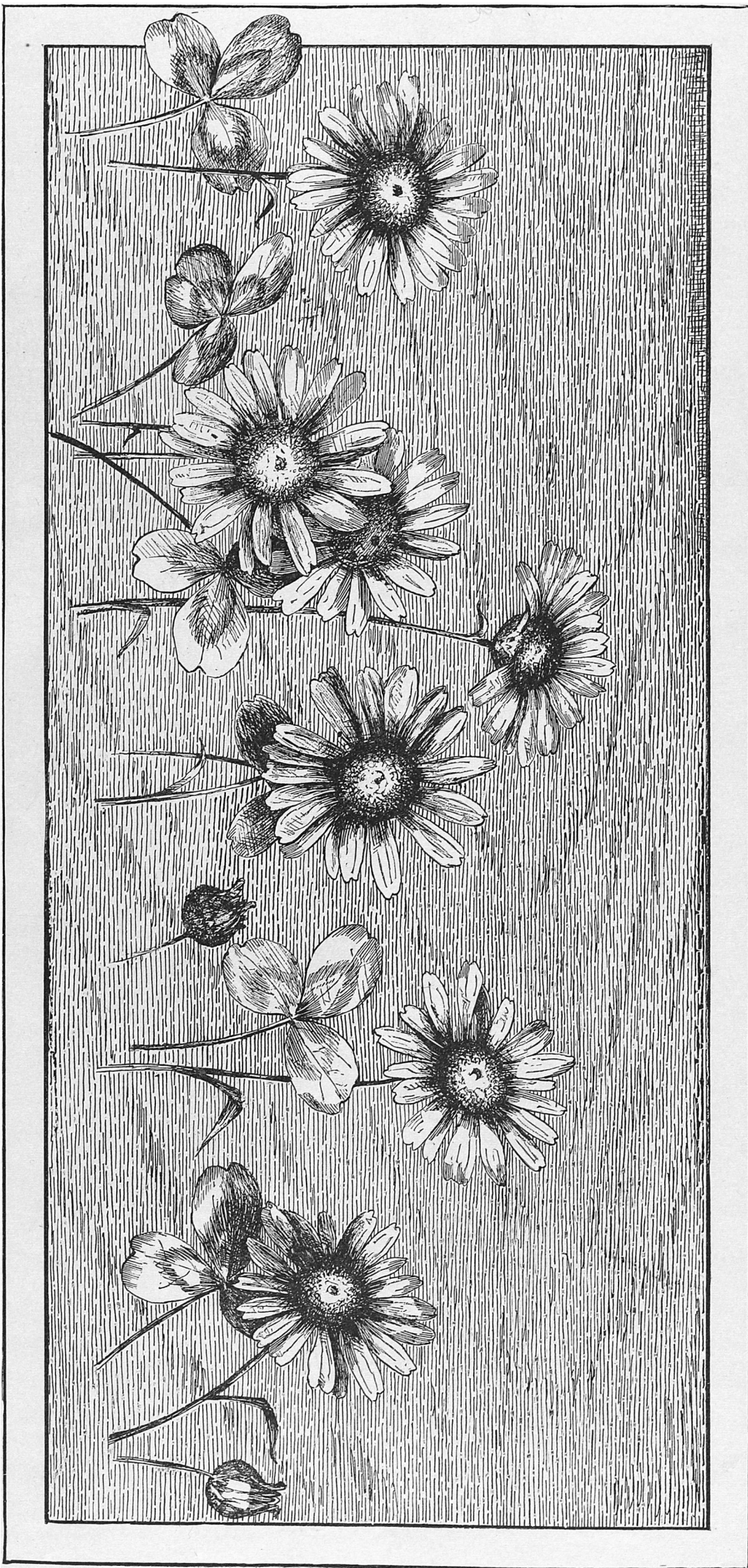
HEADS.

IN painting a head it must be seen that the drawing is absolutely correct before a brush is put to it. If the student has no idea of modelling with charcoal or crayon there is little hope that he will succeed with color.

In preference to beginning by copying some flat-tinted print reach out for a higher standard and choose your subject from life. Take the simplest head you can command—a young girl's if possible. Having made an accurate drawing, wet the entire surface of the paper. Wait until it is half dry and begin with the prevailing tint of the face. Place upon your palette light red, vermilion, yellow ochre, new blue or cobalt, emerald green, rose madder and a little light cadmium. It will depend somewhat upon the complexion which of the reds you take with the yellow ochre or cadmium. You will be the judge. Experiment upon the palette. Wash the whole surface of the face, ears and neck with the tint preferred, leaving the white of the eye and the eye-ball. Before this tint is quite dry wash in the shadows under the eye-brows, beside the nose, under the nose, under the under lip, under the chin, at the side of the face toward the ear or ears. For the shadows add burnt Sienna and Vandyck brown to the palette, and to these add blue, and, perhaps, the green, taking care to preserve the reflected light on the cheek and under the chin. When quite dry these shadows can be washed lightly with vermilion or light red. The ear, too, can be much deeper in tint than the face. Make the white of the eye gray at both corners, with a dot of vermilion at the inner one. Preserve carefully the high light in the eye-ball, and paint the eye-balls with appropriate colors, but do not leave a hard line of color against the white of the eye. A good way to prevent this is to wet the whole surface of the eye, and lay in while still wet the right color, or, if this is too difficult, after the eye-ball is painted lay a drop of clear water from the brush on either side on the white of the eye and this will soften the edge of color. The same care should be observed with the eye-brows; but little color is required, as they insensibly blend with the shadows beneath the brow. Vermilion and a little Vandyck brown or brown madder will emphasize the nostrils and the centre line of the mouth. Only the high light on the lower lip will bear a touch of vermilion. Round off the lip with brown madder added. Emphasize the shadow underneath. If the paper has dried around the edge of the hair, around the face and around the background, wet again with clear water. Almost all colors of hair will look gray in the high lights, therefore wash those in first. New blue and raw umber will be suitable in almost every case; if not a thin wash of lamp-black. Then in appropriate tints lay in the shadows; the middle tints will easily blend with a half dry brush. Let the strokes of the brush follow the direction of the flowing of the hair. If the paper is moist beyond the hair lay in the background broadly, with a large brush, darker in tint near the hair, lighter as a rule on the shaded side of the head, and darker on the lighter side of the head—whichever is preferred.

It is plain that for good effect the tints of the face should so blend even in the shadows that there will be nothing harsh or striking either in tint or tone. It is a matter of choice whether the shadows are washed in or stippled—that is, worked in with the point of the brush in little dots of color. With large heads this is almost impossible to manage, whereas with very small heads it is hardly possible to work any other way. In strong, minute shadows the perpendicular stroke with the brush is absolutely necessary.

Crimson lake is sometimes used instead of vermilion for the lips, but lake is a treacherous color; carmine modified with brown madder is better.







V. Dangon 88.

STUDY OF PEONIES. BY VICTOR DANGON.

(FOR DIRECTIONS FOR TREATMENT IN OIL COLORS, SEE PAGE 125.)

For light hair use yellow ochre, Vandyck brown and new blue; for brown hair, Roman ochre, Vandyck brown and blue; the same brown and blue and ivory black or lamp-black for black hair. A great deal depends upon the high lights of the hair; if these are correct in tint the prevailing color is easily managed.

Aim at clearness as well as brilliancy in the complexion; keep the colors clean and separate on the palette like the hues of flowers.

Select for the background a tint harmonious with the hair and the drapery about the neck, and do not make it too dark. The same rule holds here as well as with other branches of water-colors. Delicate tints and transparency are, perhaps, the more difficult, but certainly the more pleasing.

X.—FIGURES.

It is presumed that the reader will not attempt to paint figures without having had careful training in drawing from life. So much depends upon correct drawing that the handling of the colors seems almost of secondary importance. Then, too, the water-color student having mastered the combinations of colors used for painting flowers, landscapes, and heads, the necessary manipulation has been already reached, and the eye so trained that very little more need be said. One can hardly too strongly enforce the caution, however, to keep the colors transparent, simple and low in tone. That is to say, do not use the more brilliant colors in draperies or accessories; the flesh tints of the face and hands look brighter and clearer if these are sober. Aim to select harmonious tints for complexion, eyes and hair. Make studies of drapery before attempting a model. You can do this by throwing a plain-colored shawl over a chair, or paint simply the skirt of a person obliged to remain quiet an hour or two at some occupation. It is exceedingly tiresome to sit for a beginner, so it is a good plan to utilize the unconscious pose of a friend. For this purpose almost any one will sit in a good light, and if not obliged to keep absolutely still will submit with very good grace to be shockingly misrepresented on paper. Do not attempt the whole figure at first. In *The Art Amateur* you will find studies of parts of figures by artists of reputation—copy and color these for the sake of the practice.

In addition to the colors used in painting heads add to your palette Indian yellow, Indian red, vermilion, brown madder, cobalt, sepia, lake and indigo. The more transparent these colors are kept the more pleasing will be the effect. L. STEELE KELLOGG.

HINTS ABOUT CHARCOAL DRAWING.

II.

THE quality of a charcoal drawing depends, in great measure, on that of the paper used for it. If coarse textures of rock and foliage be all that are required, then large-grained paper will give the most striking results; but for fine textures, like those of flesh, sky, and water, a smoother surface is necessary. Absolutely smooth paper will not do, as it does not catch the charcoal. Still, when a person wants to combine the two extremes, as Mr. Sarony sometimes does, when he opposes smooth flesh textures to very rough draperies, furs, and backgrounds, several modes of proceeding are open to him. The best is to take a rather fine-grained paper and work over the smoother and paler surfaces with small soft chamois stumps and with the finger tips and pith of bread, giving the final modelling by very careful and judicious stippling either with a stiffer paper stump or with the point of the charcoal. The rougher and darker surfaces are done with the charcoal only. It is used full length for flat coarse surfaces, such as those of a rough cast wall or a moss-grown rock. The same texture, modified slightly by stump and point work, will do for heavy draperies of roughish material; and for the most spirited passages, the broad point of a thick stick of soft charcoal is used in vigorous cross-hatching, quite unlike any natural texture, yet suggestive. Long practice and careful observation will show one how to combine these processes in a great variety of ways, so as to make quite a close approach to nature; but it should be needless to repeat that a thorough grounding in form is requisite to success.

There are one or two little "tricks" which artists of repute do not disdain to make use of for the purpose of increasing the range of textures open to them. One which is especially useful in landscape, and to which there can be no objection, is (when using a rather coarse-grained

paper for the sake of the broad foliage effects to which it lends itself) to burnish down the parts reserved for sky and water before working on them. To do this well requires a good deal of practice and a strong determination not to do too much of it; but, properly done, it is a great aid in obtaining fulness and variety. It gives atmosphere to the distance and relief to the foreground. The other plan is the reverse one of using fine-grained paper, and to roughen it, where necessary, by sand-paper or by a wash of Chinese white. The sand-papered surface gives an ugly, mechanical "gritty" look to the tints laid on it. The whitened surface is better, as its inequalities are more irregular, but it is apt, do what one will, to show as a patch on the drawing, and an artist is always willing to sacrifice effect for harmony.

For anything more than a sketch or a very restricted study, white paper should be used. The brilliancy and transparency of charcoal depend on the specks of white paper showing through the black or gray of the charcoal, and, of course, a tint, no matter how light, lessens this effect. Tints are yet very useful, as already pointed out, in studies and sketches wherein the outline and the masses of shade are alone to be represented. The tint then takes the place of the lights and half tones. The practice of indicating the lights with Chinese white,



VASE WITH VIRGINIA-CREEPER DECORATION.
(FOR FULL-SIZE WORKING DESIGN, SEE SUPPLEMENT PAGES.)

unless for special purposes, should be discouraged. It is destructive to the sense of harmony. Very beautiful and very useful work may be done without indicating the high lights, and we are almost prepared to say that a moderately toned papier vergé is in general the best paper that a student can use; but for more complete study a rather close-grained white paper is preferable, allowing (as it does) the student to obtain a complete range of half tones by the means indicated above, and also of the taking out of lights with the clean stump, rubber, or bread pith.

It may be as well to mention, for the benefit of country readers, that the fixative used for fixing the charcoal to the paper can be made by themselves of gum-lac dissolved in spirits of wine. A weak solution will do. The color should not be darker than that of pale sherry. It is nearly impossible to fix charcoal thoroughly, so that none of it will rub off, without losing transparency and effect. It is even preferable, when possible, to put the drawing at once under glass when finished, rather than use any fixative at all. In landscape work from nature it is necessary to use some fixative on account of the liability to injury in carrying the work home. It is well, in such case, to let the work dry and then retouch it vigorously where it has become most opaque, which will be in the deepest shadows. This is quite possible, as the fixative gives a new "tooth" to the paper. A rough wooden frame should be brought along to lay over the

drawing, and a piece of stiff cardboard to place upon that, the drawing, frame and board to be then strapped together. By this means the face of the drawing will be preserved from rubbing against anything on the way home, and the moderate application of fixative will prevent the charcoal falling off of itself.

(To be continued.)

China Painting.

THE VIRGINIA-CREEPER VASE.

THE design for the vase illustrated herewith is given full working size in one of the supplement sheets. For the berries add a little purple No. 2 to dark blue. For the leaves use orange red, red brown and black, adding the black to the red for shading. If desired, a more bronze tone may be given to the leaves around the base by adding brown green. Use red brown for the leaf stalks, berry stems and small branches, adding dark brown for large branches. The vase form (furnished by Cooley, Boston, Mass.) is of cream white, thirteen and one half inches high. In the ivory white ware, the Pompeian Vase fifteen inches and the Ceylon Vase twelve inches high are of the same general shape. Use unburnished gold for the base and top, allowing it to chip irregularly from the upper edge. For the background leave the white of the china or use light yellow tint.

MINERAL COLOR COMBINATIONS.

So much stress has been laid upon the difficulties of firing the combined mineral colors, that many persons are debarred from attempting china-painting on account of the risk. To tell the truth there are but few colors that will not readily mix with others. As previously stated there are certain specific rules to be observed in painting on china; if these are followed, and the firer understands his business, there is very little cause to fear that the colors will not come out right. If properly prepared by the manufacturer, the colors will fuse together at the same temperature, and will all appear equally bright and glossy.

The heat for all colors is generally regulated by that applied to rose color, as that alters in tone when under or over fired. It is therefore called the *test color*. Many amateurs have "gone frantic" over their wild roses or apple-blossoms completely spoiled. Instead of the delicate rosy tint they expected, they see a dull, faint brown, or more often a laky purple. This may indicate that the china has had either too little or too much fire. But more often the fault is in the management of the color. Carmine No. 1 (Lacroix) and English pink, and carmine (Hancock) require more oil than most colors in the rubbing up on the palette, and should be laid on *very thin*. Those two words tell the whole secret.

It has been thought that carmines, being made from gold, will not mix with other colors. They will not, it is true, combine with all, but they will mix readily with the browns, and with black or the blue greens. The two latter are useful in shading roses, although in many famous factories the carmine has been used alone for shading roses. Nothing can equal the beauty of this tint when correctly managed. A delicate rose ground is one of the daintiest colors on china.

The blues are all susceptible of combination with other colors. But the china-painter, having painted in oil or water-colors, must not expect to obtain agreeable greens by the mixture of any of the blues with the yellows, as these combinations only produce neutral tints. If a green is desired, take a manufactured green, and modify it to please you.

The greens are many and very beautiful. They will all mix with the browns, orange or yellows; the blue greens with carmine. There will be no occasion to mix them with red or purple. The deep blue greens in the Lacroix and Hancock colors are identical. I place this first and foremost because it is so beautiful and so useful. It is of a pale turquoise tint, and in its thinnest wash very bright; therefore it makes a good grounding color, and does not alter much in firing. With the addition of gray it is serviceable for the backs of leaves, or for leaves, stems and grasses in the background. A little yellow added answers for delicate leaves or buds; and mixed with brown green or black green, it is good for shading. This color is much used on French china, and is freely employed for filling in spaces in Japanese or Chinese style.